

AMENDED IN SENATE APRIL 4, 2005

SENATE BILL

No. 424

Introduced by Senators Poochigian and Speier

(Principal coauthor: Senator Scott)

(Principal coauthor: Assembly Member Aghazarian)

(Coauthor: Senators Battin, Cox, Dutton, Kuehl, and Torlakson)

~~(Coauthor: Assembly Member Aghazarian)~~ *Coauthors: Assembly Members Bogh, Canciamilla, Chan, Daucher, DeVore, Frommer, Huff, Laird, Nakanishi, Sharon Runner, and Villines)*

February 17, 2005

An act to add Section 6720 to the Government Code, relating to Armenia.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SB 424, as amended, Poochigian. Armenian Genocide.

Existing law requires the Governor to proclaim certain days every year for specified reasons.

This bill would establish April 24 of each year as the "California Day of Remembrance of the Armenian Genocide" and the period beginning on the Sunday before that day through the following Sunday as the days of remembrance of the Armenian Genocide.

Vote: majority. Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: no. State-mandated local program: no.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

- 1 SECTION 1. (a) Upon the occasion of the 90th anniversary
- 2 of the Armenian Genocide, the Legislature recognizes that
- 3 1,500,000 Armenians living in their 3,000-year historic
- 4 homeland were subjected to torture, starvation, and murder,

1 including death marches into the Syrian desert, by the rulers of
2 the Ottoman Turkish Empire and the exile of more than 500,000
3 innocent people during the period from 1915–23. The Armenian
4 Genocide, *also* known as the “First Genocide of the Twentieth
5 Century,” represented a deliberate attempt to eliminate all traces
6 of a thriving noble civilization.

7 (b) In recognition of the anniversary of this Genocide and an
8 open condemnation of these crimes against humanity, it is crucial
9 to publicly acknowledge the occurrence of the Armenian
10 Genocide, as it is denied to this day by the Republic of Turkey,
11 and to prevent the repetition of similar future atrocities
12 committed against any people.

13 (c) Armenian communities all over the world commemorate
14 this great tragedy on April 24, because it was on that day in 1915
15 when hundreds of Armenian intellectual, political, religious, and
16 business leaders were arrested and taken from their homes in
17 Constantinople before dawn and brutally murdered.

18 SEC. 2. Section 6720 is added to the Government Code, to
19 read:

20 6720. April 24 of each year shall be the “California Day of
21 Remembrance of the Armenian Genocide,” and the period
22 beginning on the Sunday before that day through the following
23 Sunday shall be the days of remembrance in this state, and shall
24 annually be so proclaimed by the Governor, in memory of the
25 1,500,000 victims who were subjected to torture, starvation, and
26 murder, including death marches into the Syrian desert, by the
27 rulers of the Ottoman Turkish Empire and the exile of more than
28 500,000 innocent people during the period from 1915 to 1923,
29 inclusive, and in honor of the survivors of those crimes against
30 humanity.